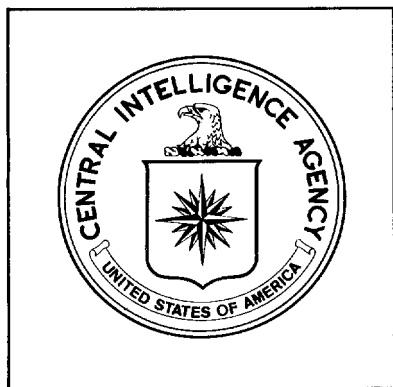


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STAFF NOTES:

Soviet Union Eastern Europe

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SOVIET UNION - EASTERN EUROPE

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the USSR - Eastern Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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Soviet View of Southeast Asia

Moscow, although obviously pleased with Hanoi's successful operations in South Vietnam, is still treating them as justified retaliation for Saigon's violation of the peace accord.

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[redacted] the Deputy Chief of the Southeast Asia division of the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs, argued that recent events were more the result of a South Vietnamese collapse than of a major North Vietnamese offensive. Kuznetsov avoided criticizing the US role in Indochina [redacted]
25X1 [redacted] Moscow still wanted a negotiated settlement and would welcome any US initiative.

Despite this effort to portray the Soviets as reasonable, Kuznetsov acknowledged that Moscow backed the PRG's position on negotiations, including the necessity of President Thieu's removal. Kuznetsov said that Moscow still favored a political rather than a military solution in South Vietnam, but he gave no indication that Moscow was making such an argument in Hanoi.

The Soviets are also still talking about negotiations in Cambodia, although they clearly view them as nothing more than a means to provide an orderly transfer of power. Kuznetsov conceded that Moscow recognizes that Sihanouk will probably play some role in Phnom Penh after a communist victory. He denigrated Sihanouk's importance over the long haul, however, and repeated long-standing Soviet complaints of Sihanouk's unreliability. [redacted]
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Romania: Ceausescu Traveling Again

President Ceausescu left Romania on April 3 for a tour of Japan, the Philippines, Jordan, and Tunisia in hopes of bolstering Romania's political prestige and international economic position. He will be gone until April 19.

Ceausescu had hoped to have an even more extensive itinerary, including Kuwait, Australia, New Zealand, and Indonesia. Invitations from the last three arrived too late. Kuwait, from which the Romanians had unsuccessfully sought a \$500-million credit, canceled out at the last minute because of the assassination of King Faisal.

Japan, one of the few great industrial powers that Ceausescu has not visited, is viewed by the Romanians as a good potential source of technology and credit. The Japanese press has already reported that Romania will receive 10 billion yen in bank loans to help finance Ceausescu's Constanta port expansion project. Ceausescu, however, will reportedly be less successful in obtaining Japanese development aid because Tokyo considers Romania a "substantially industrialized country."

The Romanians will play up the "fellow developing country" theme in Manila, which only recently established diplomatic relations with Bucharest.

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In Jordan and Tunisia, Ceausescu will wear the "friend-of-the-Arabs" robes that have helped Bucharest expand markets and obtain oil in the Arab world even while maintaining relations with Israel. Ceausescu can be expected to plump for the inclusion of other Mediterranean and European states--including Romania--in the Geneva talks on the Mideast. In addition, Ceausescu's desire for some form of association with the nonaligned movement will undoubtedly come up in Tunis. [REDACTED]

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Romanians Stand Fast at the CSCE

Romanian objections to the formulation of several key items on the CSCE agenda could prolong the second stage of the European security talks in Geneva, but it is doubtful that Bucharest will remain adamant to the point of causing significant delays. The Soviets will oppose most if not all of the Romanian positions, and the Romanians may feel that by advancing the issues they have made their case.

Bucharest is obviously trying once again to have its views on national sovereignty accepted and legitimized in every possible international forum. In the case of the European security talks, the Romanians are also trying to ensure that the conference documents do not endorse the status quo between Eastern and Western Europe. The pursuit of these goals has sometimes put the Romanians at odds with the US, but more often has worked against Moscow.

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Belgrade Upset At Grechko Version
of Wartime Liberations

The day after Tito issued a stinging rebuttal of Warsaw Pact Commander Yakubovskiy's "denigration" of the Yugoslav war effort [redacted] a similar article by Soviet Defense Minister Grechko appeared in a Prague military daily. Milika Sundic, a radio commentator with excellent access to inside sources in Belgrade, has indicated the official response to this article also will be heated.

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In a broadcast on Thursday, he criticized Grechko and Yakubovskiy by name and attacked Grechko for going one step further in disputing any non-Soviet "contribution to the great victory over fascism." In view of the Soviet marshal's efforts to belittle the Yugoslav national liberation struggle, Sundic said, the question arises whether Soviet officers--or other officials--actually want good relations with Belgrade. He added that the article's appearance in the Czechoslovak press "reminds one of many things unfavorable" to both countries. In a final shot, Sundic asserted that Soviet marshals sometimes meddle in politics more than is proper for military men in a socialist country.

Tanjug, the Yugoslav news agency, has thus far given its domestic audience no more than the flavor of the Grechko article and a repetition of the key parts of Tito's angry response to Yakubovskiy. Belgrade will undoubtedly issue a more detailed reply once Tito, who is on tour in the Kosovo, has studied the Grechko article. [redacted]

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